(b) if so, the details thereof and action being taken against Pharma companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) No. Sir. However, cases of duty evasion have been booked against some of the Pharma companies.

(b) The details of cases booked against Pharma companies for last three years are as follow:

(Rs. in crore)

Year	No. of cases booked	Duty involved
2004-05	78	111.92
2005-06	94	46.02
2006-07	175	58.44

Necessary action as per the Central Excise law is being taken against these companies.

Factors behind GDP Growth

1921. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth being experienced since 2003-04 is due to the favouring of big business/corporate business and encouragement to the private corporate investment at the cost of public sector and the agricultural sector;

(b) if so, whether living standards of agriculturists and employees in the public sector are consummerate with the experienced GDP growth rate; and

(c) if not, what are the steps contemplated by Government for increasing their standards of living?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) The country has witnessed an all round growth since 2003-04. As against the overall GDP growth of 8.7 per cent during 2003-04 to 2007-08, the agriculture and allied sectors recorded a growth rate of 4.4 per cent, the industrial sector a growth rate of 9.6 per cent and services sector a growth rate of 10.0 per cent, at constant (1999-2000) prices, as per the available data from the Central Statistical Organization. Since different sectors and sub-sectors of the economy have grown at different rates, the population groups dependent on these sectors would have benefited differently.

(c) For the Eleventh Five Year Plan, the Government of India has launched the National Food Security Mission and the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana with a view of rejuventate agriculture and improve farm incomes. In the proposal for the Union Budget 2008-09, the Finance Minister announced a scheme of debt waiver and debt relief estimated at around Rs. 60,314 crore for farmers which would cover all agricultural loans disbursed by scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative credit institutions up to March 31, 2007 and overdue as on December 31, 2007. The Government estimates that about 3 crore small and marginal farmers and about 1 crore other farmers will benefit from this scheme. In

respect of the public sector employees, the tax proposals for the Union Budget 2008-09 have provided significant relief for the tax paying public sector employees. The Government has also constituted the Sixth Central Pay Commission, which is expected to give its recommendations shortly.

Waiving of Farm Loans

1922. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI DARA SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has reportedly agreed that farm loans worth around Rs. 100,000 crore classified non-performing and overdue, be set aside for five years and defaulting farmers, who are in debt with no fresh assistance forthcoming, be given more credit;

(b) if so, how much loan would be written off every year, if farmers paid their instalments on time;

(c) whether Government would be able to deposit Rs. 100,000 crores with banks if not immediately, then over a five-year period; and

(d) what budgetary provisions are likely to be made during ensuing Budget for 2008-09?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (d) In the Union Budget 2008-09, the Government has announced a debt waiver and debt relief scheme for farmers, which covers all agricultural loans disbursed by schedueld Commercial Banks (SCBs), Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) and Cooperative Banks upto 31st March, 2007 and overdue as on 31st December, 2007. The scheme stipulates complete waiver of all loans that were overdue on 31.12.2007 and which remained unpaid untill 29.02.2008 for small and marginal farmers, while there is a One Time Settlement (OTS) scheme for other farmers during the same period. The OTS covers a rebate of 25% against payment of the balance amount of 75%.

Government estimates that about three crore small and marginal farmers and about one crore other farmers whose loans are overdue on 31.12.2007 will benefit from the scheme. The total value of overdue loans being waived is estimated at Rs. 50,524 crore and the OTS relief on the overdue loans is estimated at Rs. 9,790 crore.

Adoption of Methodology of Grameen Bank

1923. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that only 2 to 3 per cent of eligible small/poor borrowers are being given loans through microfinance institutions and the potential borrowers are about 30 crores as revealed in a research-oriented study conducted by Deutsche Bank;

(b) if so, what is the perspective planning in this regard; and

(c) whether it is feasible to adopt the methodology of Grameen bank as propounded by Nobel Peace Prize Winner Mohd. Yunis of Bangladesh where it has achieved significant success by way of 35 per cent penetration?